My digital story about becoming fat on fast food

Produced and directed by Makhpiya Shannacappo
Greetings from Lapland
my name is Makhpiya Shannacappo
In Finish it sounds like this “terveisia Lapista nimeni on Makhpiya Shannacappo”…
... but everyone calls me Makhy to make me sound more Finnish!
By birth I am a New World Indian or as we call it a First Nation
I was orphaned at an early age and raised by Swedish foster parents who returned back to Sweden when I was in my late teens.
I am proud that my real father was a community leader who hunted and fished in the Northwest Territory of Canada.
My Foster father was originally a Sami – those are the indigenous reindeer herders living in northern Norway, Sweden and Finland.
Not surprisingly I embarked on an academic career examining the modernisation of traditional societies.
Currently I lecture in Tourism at the University of Lapland at Rovaniemi
As a researcher I have travelled the world from Southeast Asia to South America
What fascinates me is the take-over of the world by corporations.
Is there anywhere in the world you cannot buy a can of Coke Cola or munch on a Mac burger?
Being single and having no family I have spent most of my time researching and giving lectures and paying too little attention to my diet and health.
I have also spent several sabbatical years in the USA at the University of Missouri at St Louis
So I am really aware about the growing obesity pandemic. In my country we are consuming more fast food and getting fat and...
there is even a McDonalds in my own town and it is the most northerly McDonalds in the world...

Percy Tak http://www.flickr.com/photos/meteorry/
and the first Starbucks opened in Helsinki last year. Did you know the Finns are the largest coffee drinkers in the world?

Chiva Congelado
http://www.flickr.com/photos/chivacongelado/
How can indigenous cultures and cuisines survive in the world of McDonalds, KFC’s and Pizza Huts I wonder?
This is why I am now researching the loss of cultural identity under globalisation and its impacts on the tourism industry.
and also admit I have enjoyed a good few Big Macs and cans of Coke in my time
So I have also been thinking about how fast food and McDonald hamburgers and fries have affected me?
Earlier this year I visited my doctor for a check-up. I actually go back home to Gottenborg for these annual check-ups and I have had the same doctor since my teens.
I known I am overweight but my long-time doctor friend, was really concerned this time at my obesity and that I am now pre-diabetic.
Obesity is defined from your BMI or Body Mass Index. This is calculated from your height and weight.

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\text{mass}(\text{kg}) = \frac{\text{mass}(\text{kg})}{(\text{height}(\text{m}))^2}
\]
My BMI is 40 which is classified as Obese Class II (or severely obese). I am 1.71 m in height and weigh 118 kg.
On each visit my doctor took photos of me. He pulled out his file to show me these and how I have gained weight since 1975.
Laughing and you can out those groovy haircuts of the 80s and 90’s
I now need to lose 50 kg (the size of a small person) to not be over-weight.
And simply to lose the label of being obese requires a loss of 30 kg that is the weight of my German Shepherd dog!
Can I blame the Big Mac for making me fat? I can clearly remember when McDonalds arrived in Canada and the first of my many McD meals.
Americans are suing the giant multi-nationals for “making” them fat.
This is partly based on how the company has targeted children in their marketing campaigns.
In 1979 McDonalds introduced its first Happy Meal which came with a cheap plastic toy.
This was marketing that the breakfast cereal producers like Kellogg’s had earlier pioneered to sell more of their products.
McDonald’s is now the world’s largest toy distributor!!! One-fifth of all McD meals include a toy
They also introduced a clown called Ronald who encourages kids to nag their parents to take them to the nearest McDs but ....
in Sweden and Finland there is no Ronald McDonald to prevent this type of subversive marketing to children

Delfin Vassallo
http://www.flickr.com/photos/40481200@N06/5591750034/
The final piece of the marketing to children is the play centre at many McDonalds.
Of course McDonalds would argue that often the only safe place to play in poor neighbourhoods is the building with the golden arches.
When people started to file law suits at McDonalds it opened up opportunities for the corporation to be publically examined.
In 2004 Morgan Spurlock’s film “Super Size Me” hit the main cinema screens and was a wakeup call for many people. And even more Americans are consulting their lawyers.
A month of eating nothing but McDonald meals resulted in Morgan gaining more than 11 kg a 13% increase in his body mass.
This controversial documentary got refuted with other films that re-examined fast food such as “Fat Head” by Tom Naughton.
Eating at McDonalds and other fast food outlets, but limiting the amount of high-sugar sodas and high-fat fries Tom lost weight and improved his blood chemistry.
McDonalds and other fast food outlets responded introducing more healthy options like salad bars.
In my next video I will investigate the McDonalds Empire, its Corporate Social Responsibility using the triple bottom line auditing.
Until then I will say bye or as we say it here in the north "hei hei!"